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RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE

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SUBJECT: KASAB UNEXPECTEDLY ADMITS TO CARRYING OUT MUMBAI ATTACKS, NAMES THOSE WHO TRAINED HIM

¶11. The sole survivor of the ten member team alleged to have carried out last November's terrorist attacks on Mumbai, Mohammad Ajmal Amir Kasab, unexpectedly admitted his guilt to the judge in court on July 20. As prosecutors prepared to question the 135th witness out of the 150 slated to testify in the case, Kasab suddenly stood up before the court and reportedly declared "I plead guilty to my crime." In his admission, he named Lakshar-e-Taiba members Zakir-ur-Rehman Lakhvi and Abu Hamza as masterminds of the attacks, and listed the nine attackers who accompanied him and were killed in Mumbai. He also named "Abu Kafa" and "Abu Zunjal" as participants. Kasab detailed the entire sequence of events, starting from the launch site near Karachi where he said Lakhvi boarded the ten terrorists onto the first of four boats that would carry them to Mumbai. He also admitted his involvement at the CST railway station and the Cama Hospital.

¶12. Kasab is charged on at least 86 counts, including waging war against India and murder. In May, he pleaded not guilty to all charges. Kasab reportedly told the press he was confessing now because Pakistan had "disowned" him. (Pakistani investigators had listed Kasab in a charge sheet related to the attacks released on July 19.)

¶13. Comment: We expect the court to go into recess tomorrow and put further testimony will be put on hold, in order to give the prosecution and judges an opportunity to explore the legality of the confession. At least one supreme court official told the press it was not clear whether Kasab had confessed voluntarily. It is also not clear how Kasab's confession will affect the trials of the two Indian national being tried in connection with the Mumbai attacks. End
Comment.
ROEMER